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Alcestis Barcinonensis

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urbis Urbanae conlegis urbanis

1. The Papyrus

The long P. Barcinonensis, Inv. Nos. 158ab, 159ab, 160ab, 161a (saec. IV²), comprises a fascinating late Latin poem of 122 hexameters (the original had at least 125 lines) dealing with the heroic death of Alcestis to save the life of her husband Admetus. The text of the poem spreads over six closely written pages of the papyrus (125 × 103 mm), with four lines on the seventh page. The script is early half-uncial with cursive elements, probably belonging to the second half of the fourth century. These four papyrus leaves were later incorporated into a *codex mixtus* (the property of the Foundation *Sant Lluc Evangelista* at Barcelona), as its fols. 33-36. Our *Alcestis* is preceded in the codex by Cicero's *Catilinarians* 1 and 2 (fols. 1-24a); by a Latin *Psalmus Responsorius* (fols. 24b-28a); and by a Greek liturgical text (fols. 29b-32). The five papyrus leaves containing the *Psalmus Responsorius* are briefly described by E. A. Lowe, as No. 1782 of the *Supplement* to his *Codices Latini Antiquiores* (Oxford 1971), p. 32. Lowe dated the script of the Psalm to saec. IV². This is valid for the text of our *Alcestis* as well, since it is copied by the same scribe.

Dr. R. Roca-Puig deserves the gratitude of scholars for having published first the Barcelona Psalm (Barcelona 1965), then the *Catilinarians* 1 and 2 (Barcelona 1977), and now *Alcestis* as well (*Alcestis. Hexàmetres Llatins*, Barcelona 1982). The papyrus is preserved in excellent condition: it shows no physical damage, and is written

in a relatively readable hand. The papyrus patch pasted on p. 158a, lines 12-16, does not affect legibility. The text of the poem is copied as if it were prose, all in one breath, with only an occasional dot marking the end of a line.

However, what makes the text difficult to read and understand is its scribe. Doubtless he was copying from a poor exemplar, plagued with textual corruptions and intrusive glosses. For example, in v. 3 of the poem the unmetrical gloss *Apollo* has ousted the original reading *Arcitenens* (if my guess is correct), and another explanatory gloss *Apollo* still stands above the word *Lauripotens* of v. 1. In line 13, the word *inquit* seems to refer to the marginal gloss: *Apollo inquit*, as does the *inquit* of line 72: *Alcestis inquit*. In line 124 there is a blank space of three letters (*mea*) for a word illegible in the exemplar.

The scribe himself, however, is the main culprit. He is (1) illiterate, (2) negligent, and, even worse, (3) he sometimes assumes the role of a *redactor*, taking the liberty of deliberately changing the text.

(1) As for the scribe's illiteracy, Lowe's remark remains valid for the text of *Alcestis* as well: ". . . the scribe was unused to copying Latin." ". . . by a scribe who did not quite understand what he was copying." There seems to be more to it than this. Our scribe apparently knew the spoken Vulgar Latin, but not enough of the classical Latin of the poem he was copying. Both the phonology and morphology of our text seem to reflect a struggle between vulgar and classical forms. Consider these examples: 2 *tuus* for *tuo*, and 59 *locus* for *loco*; 9 *famolum*, and 109 *famolos*; 10 *post crimine*, and 76 *post funere nostro*; 24 *requeret* (for *requirit*), 67 *perdedit* . . . *perdedit*; 96 *moreor*, and 123 *rapeor*; 116 *desponit*; 124 *claudet* (for *claudit*); 43 *dante* (for *ante*); 41 *tumulus* (for *tumulos*), 78 *atrus* (for *atros*), 110 *pictusque toros*; 116 *arsurusque omnes*; 45 *fletus* for *fletu*, 118 *manos* for *manu*; 47 *materna cernere morte*; 48 *ubira*; 50 *consumad*; 55 *urbis* for *orbis*; 61 *fratre* for *fratris*; 67 *Alpea* for *Althaea*, and 113 *palsama*; 117 *ratura*; 119 *oculos* for *oculis*; 121 *gremio* for *gremium*. A redundant final *-m* also witnesses to the loss of declensions: 2 *quem* (for *-que*); 13 *mors vicinam*; 38 *regnam dedi tibi*; 39 *ullam* (for *una*); 45 *nec pietatem* . . . *vincitur*; 52 *aeternam sede* (for *terrena sede*); 84 *vestigiam*.

(2) The scribe's negligence is reflected in such errors as: *genitum* (18) or *genitur* (26 and 29) for *genitor*; 24 *lacrimarum causa* for *lacrimis <quae> causa*; 26 *vides* for *dies* (this may have stood in his exemplar as *diues*; compare 42 *diu'm* for *diem*); 31 *digneos natosque* for *digneris natoque*; 36 *sicut suum* for *si quod sum*; 59 *se* for *res* (compare 90 [[*de*]]*re^{de}unt*); 72 *niquid* for *neci*; 81 *tradere pulcris* for *trade sepulcris*; 87 *digna retinere* for *dignare tenere*; 124 *sembra soporem* (Spanish?) for *membra sopore*.

(3) Deliberate attempts by the scribe to correct his exemplar, however, abound: 1 *doli* for *Deli*(*e*) and *piant* for *P*(*a*)*ean*; 5 *relinquam* (for *-ant*) and 80 *recedam* (for *-at*); 6 *quando* (from v. 3) *luit* for *cum fugit* (or *cum fluxit*); 8 *vitam* (for *regna*) induced by 7 *vita*, and 37 *vitam* (for *vis iam*) induced by 37 *vita*; 50 *meae* for *mihi*; perhaps 52 *aeternam* for *terrena*; 68 *colligit illa cruentus* for *colligit ilia cruda*. Here belong also the unwarranted additions to the text, such as: 9 *si* [*non*] *te colui*; 41 [*con*]cessisse[*se*]m; 69 [*pre*]cedunt; 87 f. [*neve*] . . . *nec*; 90 *tecum* [*sub nocte*] *iacebo*, inspired by 86 *tecum sub nocte iacere*; 100 *si tibi* (for *me*) *dissimiles* [*hoc*].

As a consequence, the P. Barcinonensis poses major problems of reading and interpretation. Dr. Roca-Puig has provided scholars with an accurate transcript of the papyrus, along with reasonably clear photographs. His attempt at reconstruction of the original poem, however, is far from satisfactory, since it fails to produce credible Latin poetry. After the publication of the papyrus (18 October 1982), three attempts at recovering the original poem were undertaken at the same time and independently of each other: one by Wolfgang Dieter Lebek at Cologne; another by a team of Oxford scholars (P. J. Parsons, R. G. M. Nisbet, G. O. Hutchinson); a third by myself (in the spring of 1983). The task was not easy. To quote only my Oxford colleagues: "Everything suggests an uncomprehending scribe with a difficult exemplar: the copy abounds in elementary errors and serious corruptions."

In the fall of 1983, "the provisional text" of *Alcestis* prepared by Lebek and the Oxonienses appeared (*Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 53 [1983], pp. 1-29 and 31-36, respectively). I then revised my reconstruction of the poem so as to incorporate their impressive scholarship wherever convincing enough. The result is the present tentative edition of the poem. As was to be expected, elementary scribal errors have found identical solutions in all three independent attempts. But in the case of the more serious corruptions differences in reading and interpretation persist. Thus I offer a different reading from either Lebek or the Oxonienses in the following lines: 2 *lectas*; 3 (Arcitenens); 6 *cum fu*(*g*)*it*; 7 *ni*; 8 (*sit*(*n*)) and (*pallida regna*?); 37 *minimam vi tollere vi*(*s*) *iam*?; 39 (vi)ta quia; 41 (g)rate cessissem (nato); 50 *mihi lucis*; 52 *ter*(*r*)*ena sede*; 55 *nascitur, ac nobis iteratus fingitur orbis*; 56 *late*: (ibi) *te*; 59 *quo* (r)es; 62 (T)ita(nu)m ex arte perisse; 67 *Alt*(ha)ea (g)natum; 68 *dum colligit ilia cruda*; 74 *Admete, (ad)ventura*; 80 *dum*; 95 *ex te*; 99 *prodat, et* (h)eu flentes; 100 *si me dissimules, si*; 101 *paulum ad te veni*(at) . . .; 118 *tractavitque manu*. In addition, while Lebek recognizes no textual lacunas at all, and the Oxonienses

one lacuna (hiding in *paones* of P after line 110), I assume two textual lacunas—after line 110, and after line 101, hiding in *ueniet*, and containing the apodosis to the clause of 100 f.: *Si me dissimules, si non mea dulcis imago / paulum ad te veni(at)*.

2. The Content of the Poem

The *Alcestis Barcinonensis* belongs to the genre of late Latin exercises in verse composition, ethopoeia, rhetoric, and mythological erudition. The *Alcesta* of the *Anthologia Latina* (No. 15; 162 hexameters) is its closest parallel. Dracontius' *Hylas* and *Orestis Tragoedia* belong to the same genre. But what a difference between the *Alcesta* of the A.L. and our *Alcestis*! The former is basically a Vergilian cento, while the latter is the product of an inspired, skilled and learned poet. To quote again my Oxford colleagues: "*Alcesta* . . . : a flaccid pastiche which points up the merits of the Barcelona bard." Nevertheless, the *Alcesta* is of relevance for the understanding of our poem (and has been taken into consideration in my *Quellenapparat* wherever appropriate).

In brief, once restored to its pristine beauty, the Barcelona *Alcestis* proves to be a skillful and convincing late Latin poem. *Pace* Hutchinson, it seems to be complete. It opens with a grandiloquent invocation of Apollo by Admetus; it closes with Alcestis' death (just like the *Alcesta* of A.L.). The poem falls easily into four parts, arranged climactically:

- (1) Admetus asks and Apollo answers (1-20);
- (2) Admetus is rejected by his father and mother (21-70);
- (3) The *rhexis* of Alcestis (71-103);
- (4) Alcestis' death (104-124).

In each one of the four parts the poet displays a sophistication which bears testimony to his aspiration to the status of *poeta doctus*.

Lines 1-20

Admetus invokes Apollo, eager to learn his exact day of death. In his *epiclesis*, he employs no less than six epithets for the invoked divinity, and takes good care to remind Apollo that he "owes him one" (*do, ut des*: 9-11; *si te colui . . . succepi . . . accepi iussi(que)*). The speaker identifies himself with 4 *Admeti fatalia fila*. It is worth pointing out that Admetus draws a distinction between his spirit (6 *animus*) and his very being (5 *ego*). After his death, Admetus is sure his spirit will ascend to "the starry sphere" (6 *siderea(s) animus cum fu(g)it in auras*). What he does not know, however, is where his own self will go—to Hades (8) or, say, to the Islands of the Blessed.

Apollo obliges his ex-master by revealing that his day of death is imminent: Admetus must approach the realm of Hades. However, if a substitute for him can be found (his father, mother, wife, or sons), Admetus' death may be postponed. This is acceptable both to the Fates and to Apollo (27 ff.). Here our poet employs the motif expressed in 17, *tu poteris posthac alieno vivere fato*. That is to say, the remaining years allotted to the life of a relative may be transferred to the account of Admetus. The motif is known from Ovid, *Met.* VII. 168 (Jason to Medea): *deme meis annis et demptos adde parenti* (sc. Aesoni); Prop. IV. 11. 95 (our poet knew the *regina elegiarum*, cf. his v. 93); Tibull. I. 6. 63 f.¹

Lines 21-70.

Both father and mother categorically refuse to give up their lives for the son. Here the poet takes care to denigrate both the father and the mother, enabling him to extol and contrast Alcestis' noble *ethos*. The father is an anti-father (32 *hic genitor, non ut genitor*), and the mother is depicted as *nocens, improba* and *improperans* (45 f.). The father adduces two arguments in his favor: (1) "I have already given my kingdom along with my court to you. What else do you want?" and (2) "Had you the power of restoring my life after death, I would yield to your wish, but you do not have such power."

The mother's rhetoric is more sophisticated (46-70). She adduces five different arguments for her refusal.

- (1) It is a *crime* for a son (hence 47, *tu, scelerate, potes . . . ?*) to cause the destruction on a pyre of his mother's womb and breast, which had given him life in the first place.
- (2) "I would gladly give my life for my son, were I sure that afterwards he would live on earth *forever*. But this is not the case."
- (3) The Stoic argument, "Death begins with birth": 53 *Cur metui(s) mortem, cui nascimur?* Cf. Seneca, *De consolatione ad Marciam* 10. 5, and other similar literature.²
- (4) "It would be a sacrilege for me to interfere with the decree of Fate" (64 *Cur ego de nato doleam, quem fata reposcunt?*).
- (5) Finally, the inevitable set of *exempla priorum* (as old as *Iliad* V. 385-404). Even gods die (temporarily, but die): Zeus, Dionysus, Demeter, Aphrodite (60-64). "Even mothers of nobler birth than mine have lost their sons: Diomedes, Agave, Althaea, Ino, Procne. Why should I be exempt?" (65-68).

¹ Cf. Stith Thompson, *Motif-Index of Folk-Literature* (Bloomington 1966²), E165; D1855.2; T211.1.

² Lebek rightly refers to R. Kassel, *Untersuchungen zur griechischen und römischen Konsolationsliteratur, Zetemata* 18 (München 1958).

Already v. 62 *Bacc(h)um fama refert (T)ita(nu)m ex arte perisse* (cf. Clement, *Protr.* 17. 2; Arnob., *Adv. nat.* 5. 19) displays mythological erudition. But our poet also here draws two rare motifs from folklore. The first is at 54 f.: *ubi barbarus ales / nascitur, ac nobis iteratus fingitur orbis*. The birth of the strange, legendary bird the phoenix in the Orient is considered by mankind as the beginning of a new world era. This hints either at the Egyptian Sothis period of 1461 solar years, or at the *magnus annus* of 1000 or 500 years (Herodotus II. 73; Pliny, *N.H.* X. 5; XXIX. 29; Tacitus, *Ann.* VI. 28, and others). The second occurs at 59: *non est terra loco, quo (r)es generaverat ante*, which I take to be a clumsy way of saying, "the aging Mother Earth is no longer in the same shape or condition in which she was when creating all these things."³

Lines 71-103.

Alcestis adduces three reasons why she wants to sacrifice her life for her husband. In the first place, this is dictated by her sense of duty — *pietas* (75). *Pietas* is the key word of the entire poem. We have already learned (45) that Admetus' mother does not possess such *pietas* (*nec pietate, nocens, nec vincitur improba fletu*). Alcestis outdoes both parents in *pietas* (75). In the memory of posterity she will live forever as a "pious wife" (78, *et coniux pia semper ero*). Moreover, she will remain a faithful mother, caring for her children *even in her grave* (99, *matris pia . . . umbra*). And her final injunction addressed to her husband comprises the emphatic phrase: *et tu pro coniuge cara / discemori, de m(e) discememplu(m) pietatis* (102 f.), ". . . and you too learn to die for your (new) wife (if need be); learn from my example what a real sense of duty is." The phrase *pro coniuge cara* refers to Admetus' future, second wife; the one referred to at 84 f. as *coniux / carior*, and at 98 as the proverbial stepmother (*noverca*). Lebek, however, keeps the text of P: *et tu pro coniuge caro*, taking *tu* to be addressed to a young and married female reader, as a kind of *parabasis* (see his Commentary, p. 27). But this would destroy the close unity of the poem (nor is it any better to take *tu* as referring to Admetus' future wife). A scribe who was able to write *futuri* for *futura* (v. 7), *car* for *cara* (v. 18), *quae* for *qui* (v. 20), *lacrimum* for *lacrimas* or *lacrimam* (v.

³ Lebek takes *est* to mean "eats," and reads line 59 as follows: *Non est terra locos, quos egeneraverat ante?* ("Verschlingt nicht die Erde die Orte, die sie zuvor hervorgebracht hatte?"; with reference to Pliny, *N.H.* II. 205 *ipsa se comest terra . . .*). But such a seismic activity of the earth is not a self-evident truth; there is no Latin word *egenerare*; and the most natural sense of *est* is "is" (ignoring a strained interpretation of *loci* as "mountains"). In their turn, the Oxonienses read: *Non est terra loco quo se generaverat ante*. What can this mean? Does it mean that Mother Earth has her own birthplace, where she had created herself?

44), *vadam* for *vadum* (v. 63), is also able to write *caro* for *cara* in 102.

Alcestis' second reason for dying for her husband is that her glorious feat will be remembered by posterity forever (76-78); and her third reason is that by dying before her husband she will be spared a widow's wretched life of everlasting mourning (78-81).

Alcestis' last request to her husband (83-103) contains three significant elements. (1) She demands to be kept in lasting memory by her husband (83-92). (2) She entrusts to him the care of their sons (93-99). (3) Finally, she issues a *threat* in case he disobeys her last wish and consigns his dead wife to total oblivion (100-103). Each one of these three elements is intriguing.

(1) Euripides' Alcestis entreats Admetus *not* to remarry. Her main concern is her children, and she does not want them to have an evil stepmother (305, καὶ μὴ 'πιγήμεν τοῖσδε μητρὶαν τέκνοις; her entire request is worth study, 299-310). So does the *Alceste* of the *Latin Anthology* (125 f.; 127 f.). Our Alcestis, however, allows Admetus to remarry (84 *coniux*; 98 *novercae*; 102 *coniuge*). If one asks why our poet has changed the traditional myth, my answer would be: because Cornelia does not request Paullus not to remarry either (Propertius IV. 11. 85-90). Otherwise neither poet would have been able to exploit the touching motif of the traditional stepmother (*Alceste* 98 f.; Propertius IV. 11. 86 ff.). Hear the voice of Euripides (*Alc.* 309-10):

ἐχθρὰ γὰρ ἡ 'πιούσα μητρὶαν τέκνοις
τοῖς πρόσθ', ἐχίδνης οὐδὲν ἡπιωτέρα.

However, his wild imagination launches our poet into troubled waters. First, his Alcestis urges her husband not to love his second wife as dearly as he did his first wife: *ne post mea fata / dulcior ulla tibi, vestigia ne mea coniux / carior ista legat* (83-85). I am unable to parallel this, but one may easily understand such a request in view of Alcestis' noble sacrifice for her husband. Her next request, however, takes us by surprise. Alcestis asks her husband literally (85, *nec nomine tantum*) to sleep with her ghost once she is dead (85-88 and 90). One is reminded at once of the myth of Laodamia, sleeping with the *simulacrum aereum* of her beloved and deceased husband Protesilaus (Hyginus, *Fab.* 104. 1; Apollodor., *Epitome* 3. 30; Eustath. ad *Iliad.* II. 701, p. 325. 25 ff.). But did our poet know this rather recondite myth? A closer source of his inspiration is to be seen again in the *regina elegiarum* (Prop. IV. 11. 81-84). However, our poet seems to combine the shade of Cornelia with the ghost of Cynthia (Prop. IV.

7). Consider the similarity between *Alcestis* 90, *Si redeunt umbrae, veniam tecum<que> iacebo*, and Propertius IV. 7. 3-4, *Cynthia namque meo visa est incumbere fulcro, / . . . nuper humata*; IV. 7. 89, *nocte vagae ferimur, nox clausas liberat umbras*.

(2) With *Alcestis*' second request (93, *Ante omnes commendo tibi pia pignora natos*), our poet follows the poet of the *Alcesta* in his centonic zeal: Prop. IV. 11. 73, *Nunc tibi commendo communia pignora natos*. He also may prove my assumption correct that Propertius IV. 7 and IV. 11 is the main source of his inspiration for lines 83-99. However, here too he borrows a motif from folklore: the dead mother takes care of her orphans even from the grave (99, *(ne) . . . / . . . <h>eu flentes matris pia vindicet umbra*).⁴

(3) The sanction and revenge of the forgotten wife, I assume, is lost in the lacuna following the words of 100 f.: "And if you neglect me, if the sweet image of me does not come to your mind from time to time . . ." The most natural assumption seems to be that the ghost of the forgotten *Alcestis* would pursue the unmindful husband just as a Fury does. His source of inspiration might have been *Aeneid* IV. 384-86: *Sequar atris ignibus absens* (sc. *Dido Aeneas*) / *et, cum frigida mors anima seduxerit artus, / omnibus umbra locis adero* (cf. 520 f.; elsewhere our poet makes use of the diction of *Aeneid* IV).

Lines 104-124.

This final passage briefly describes *Alcestis*' preparations for her own pyre, and her death. The last night of her life she spends awake (104-07), just as *Dido* does (*Aeneid* IV. 522 f. and 529 f.). She repeatedly reminds her husband and children dutifully to mourn their deceased wife and mother; she takes care of her slaves in her will (if this is what the phrase 109 *disponit famulos* means); and, most of all, she gives orders concerning her bier and pyre. The poet pays special attention to exotic spices, perfumes, frankincense, saffron-essence, balsam, amomum-powder, and cinnamon, to be burnt on the pyre along with the young woman. I wonder why, unless this too is a display of erudition (e.g. the belief that *amomum* is derived from birds' nests: 114, *ereptum nido praecidit pulver amomi*: cf. Herodotus III. 111; Pliny, *N.H.* XII. 85).

A personified *Hora* (117), *Alcestis*' Hour of death (cf. *TLL* VI.

⁴ Compare Stith Thompson, *Motif-Index* E221.2.1; E323.2. H. Bächtold-Stäubli, *Handwörterbuch des deutschen Aberglaubens* VI (1934-35), p. 697; J. Bolte und G. Polivka, *Anmerkungen zu den Kinder- und Hausmärchen der Brüder Grimm* I (Leipzig 1913, repr. Hildesheim 1963), p. 96 (ad Grimm, Nos. 11 and 13).—Here again the *regina elegiarum* is at hand: Prop. IV. 11. 74 *haec cura* (sc. *natorum*) *et cineri spirat inusta meo*.

2963. 30-57), approaches the young woman to claim her prey. She just touches her with her cold hand (118, *tractavitque manu*), if my reading is correct (cf. 88 *tractare manu*, and Statius, *Silvae* V. 1. 88). Numbness starts taking hold of her every limb. Alcestis dies slowly, as one who has drunk hemlock. She can watch her fingernails growing blue, her freezing feet becoming heavy with cold. A fleeting shadow, woman no longer (if this is what the puzzling borrowing from *Aeneid* X. 656 and Silius XVII. 644, *fugientis imago*, means), she seeks her last refuge in her husband's lap (121). Finally, she utters her last words (122 "*Dulcissime coniux . . .*"), and slips into the eternal slumber of death (124).

3. The Diction

The poet of the *Alcestis* is building upon the best traditions of Latin poetry (notably, Vergil, Propertius, Ovid, Silius Italicus, Statius). His metrics are correct (notice, however, 6 *edoce* as a dactyl, and 26 *para* as a dibrach); his colometry is convincing enough for a late Latin poem. The flow of words is natural, and our poet has succeeded in producing a lively, informal, and pleasing Ovidian Latin. This is achieved in the first place by a frequent employment of *anaphora*: 3 *da . . . da*; 5 *quae . . . qui*<d>; 10 f. / *sucepi . . . / accepi*; 18 *cum . . . cum*; 27 *hoc . . . hoc*; 29 *tu . . . tu*; 29 f. *si . . . si*; 32 *hic genitor, non ut genitor*; 45 *nec . . . nec*; 47 f. / *tu . . . / tu*; 50 f. *hostis . . . / hostis*; 54 *quo . . . quo*; 56 *illic . . . <ibi>*; 57 *nihil . . . nihil*; 64 f. / *cur . . . / cur*; 65 *plangam . . . planxere*; 67 *perdidit . . . perdidit*; 72 *me, <me> . . . me*; *trade . . . trade*; 74 *pro coniuge coniux /*; 75 f. / *si . . . / si*; 75 *vinco . . . vinco*; 81 f. *me . . . / me*; 83 f. *ne . . . ne*; 86 *me . . . meque*; 93 f. *pignora . . . / pignora*; 100 *si . . . si*; 103 *disce . . . disce*; 109 *disponit . . . conponit*; 123 *venit . . . venit*.

The same preference for a picturesque and colloquial *anaphora*, however, turns to be occasionally a *bathos* in our poet's style. Some of his repetitions are disturbing. It is to no avail that my Oxford colleagues try to get rid of some of them (notably, 27 *hoc Parcae docuere nefas*; 113 *destringit*). I think this time the poet is to blame, not the scribe. Consider these repetitions: 16 *possit* ("who may have the heart") : 17 *poteris* ("you would be allowed to"); 25 *edocet* : 27 *docuere* : 28 *edocuit*; 72 *me . . . trade sepulcris /* : 81 *me trade sepulcris /*. Incidentally, the synonym *tumulus* appears too often for one poem (in 20; 30; 41; 48), in addition to 60 *tumulatus* and 69 *contumulantur*. 86 *tecum sub nocte iacere* : 90 *veniam tecum<que> iacebo*; 107 *peritura videbat /* : 119 *moritura notabat /*; 109 *disponit* ("gives orders in her will") : 116 *disponit* ("gives orders to servants"); 111 *odores* : 116 *odores*; 113 *destringit balsama* : 115 *destringit cinnama* (Lebek correctly remarks, "Spracharmut"), and others.

A certain sophistication and inventiveness, however, in poetic expression prevails. For example, the meaningful antithesis of 21 *maestusque beato* /, reflecting the old truth that wealth cannot buy happiness (compare the difference between εὐδαίμων and εὐτυχής at Euripides, *Alcestis* 1228-30, between ὀλβιος and εὐκλής at *Christus Patiens* 1016-18). Or the rhyme at the line-end: 60 *abisse* / : 61 *obisse* / : 62 *perisse* / : 63 *subisse*, and other alliterations: 56 *nate, late*: <ibi> *te*; 60 *tumulatus* : 61 *mutatus*; 63 *Cererem Veneremque*. Or the device of a hiatus in the main caesura: 22; 35; 56. Finally, notice the emphasis expressed in this piece of Senecan philosophy: *labuntur cedunt moriuntur contumulantur* (69).

In conclusion, the *Alcestis* from Barcelona is a valuable acquisition for late Latin poetry. Its versification is skillful, its expression is picturesque, eloquent and fascinating. Doubtless, the poet stands under the spell of Propertius' Cornelia (IV. 11) and Cynthia (IV. 7), and he has succeeded in conveying all the *ethos* of *Alcestis* and all the *pathos* of *Admetus*' plight. The main value of the poem, however, rests in its rich use of motifs drawn from folklore, spread throughout the poem (lines 5 f.; 17; 32-34; 47-50; 54 f.; 56; 59; 64; 85-88; 90; 96 f.; 99; 117 f.). These motifs deserve a closer look than was possible in a brief introduction to an edition.⁵

⁵ *Sigla*. Since the papyrus shows no physical damage, deletions by modern scholars are indicated by square brackets [] (instead of by braces), while angle brackets < > denote supplements by modern scholars. Double square brackets [[]], however, indicate deletions made by the scribe himself. The papyrus abounds in dots placed all around the letters (some of them indicate wrong letters, others again the end of a line, etc.). In the present apparatus, only the dots relevant to the reading and understanding of the poem are reported. Therefore the dots placed above or after a letter reflect supralinear or infralinear dots written by the scribe (or by an ancient reader), while the dots placed under a letter simply indicate that the letter is not clear enough (and the dots in the middle of a line denote completely illegible letters or blank *spatia*). Incidentally, our scribe sometimes writes a small *o* with a *lineola* beneath it (◌̣) and also a *b* or an *i* with a dieresis above the letter.—*Ed.* stands for the *editio princeps* by R. Roca-Puig; *Hutch.* for G. O. Hutchinson; *Leb.* for W. D. Lebek; *Marc.* for M. Marcovich; *Nisb.* for R. G. M. Nisbet, and *Pars.* for P. J. Parsons.—J. K. Newman and D. F. Bright have kindly polished my English, but for any blunder in Latin I am to blame alone: *numquam est satis provide homini*. Finally, *Ed.* offers a rich collection of poetic borrowings, not all of which are relevant.

⟨ALCESTIS⟩

“PR⟨A⟩ESCIE LAURIPOTENS, LATONIE DELI⟨E⟩ P⟨A⟩EAN:

INVOCO TE LAURUSQUE TUO DE NOMINE LECTAS.

⟨ARCITENENS⟩, DA SCIRE DIEM, DA NOSCERE, QUANDO

RUMPANT ADMETI FATALIA FILA SORORES.

QUAE FINIS VITAE, QUI⟨D⟩ MI POST FATA RELINQUANT,

5

EDOCE, SIDEREA⟨S⟩ ANIMUS CUM FU⟨G⟩IT IN AURAS.

QUAMVIS SCIRE HOMINI, NI PROSPERA VITA FUTURA ⟨EST⟩,

TORMENTUM (SIT⟨N⟩) ATRA DIES ET PALLIDA REGNA?),

EDE TAMEN, SI TE COLUI FAMULUMQUE PAVENTEM

1 *Lauripotens* : solus Mart. Capella 1. 24 || 3 *Arcitenens* (i.q. *Apollo*) : Naev. *Poet.* 30 (32). 1 (ap. Macrobian. *Sat.* 6. 5. 8); Hostianus *Poet.* 4 (6) *Apollo arcitenens Latonius*; Verg. *Aen.* 3. 75; Ov. *Met.* 1. 441; 6. 265; Sil. It. 5. 177; Stat. *Ach.* 1. 682; *Silvae* 4. 4. 95; Arnob. *Adv. nat.* 4. 22 *arcitenens Delius*; Coripp. *Iohannid.* 1. 458 / *Arcitenens*; Sidon. *Carm.* 1. 7; 23. 266 || 4 *fila Sorores* / : Sil. It. 3. 96; 17. 361; Stat. *Silvae* 1. 4. 123 || 5 *mi . . . fata relinquunt* / : Ov. *Met.* 14. 153 || 6 *animus cum fu⟨g⟩it in auras* / : Lucr. 3. 221 *spiritus . . . diffugit in auras*; 3. 400 (*anima*) . . . *discedit in auras*; 3. 436; Verg. *Aen.* 2. 791 *recessit in auras* (sc. *umbra Creusae*); 5. 740 = *Alceste* 33 *fugit ceu fumus in auras*; 11. 617 *vitam dispergit in auras*; Ov. *Heroid.* 10. 121; *Met.* 8. 524; 14. 432; Sil. It. 9. 167; 16. 545 *dirus in invitas effugit spiritus auras*; Verg. *Aen.* 3. 585 sq. *aethra / siderea* || 8 *pallida regna* : Sil. It. 11. 472; Verg. *Aen.* 8. 244 sq.; Lucan. 1. 456; Arator *Act. apost.* 1. 179 ||

inscript. *Alcestis* suppl. Marc. conl. Anth. Lat. I no. 15 *Alceste* || initium carminis deesse putat Hutch. || 1 *presciae . . . latoniaeae* P | *lauripotens* : *apollo* superscribit P, del. Leb., Hutch., Marc. | *Deli⟨e⟩ P⟨a⟩ean* Leb., Pars. (cf. v. 12) : *dolipiant* P || 2 *laurusque tuo* Leb., Pars., Marc. : *laurus* (sec. u ex corr.) *quemtuus* P | *nomine* P : *numine* Pars., agn. Leb. | *lectas* Marc. (cf. v. 70 *tegit* : *legit* P; v. 85 *legat* : *tegat* P) : *tectas* (t corr. ex c) P : *certas* Pars., agn. Leb. || 3 *Arcitenens* suppl. Marc. : *apollo* contra metrum P : — — Leb. : *imploro* Nisb. : *Phoebe, mihi* e.g. Hutch. | *scire* (s ex corr.) P || 5 *qui⟨d⟩* ed. : *qui* P : *quae* (sc. *vita*) Leb. (“das [mein Leben] mich nach meinem Tode verlässt”) | *relinqua[[nt]]m* (i.e., *nt* corr. in *m* ?) P : *relinquat* (sc. *vita*) Leb. || 6 *aedoce* P : *me doce* conl. Leb., J. K. Newman (per litteras) | *siderea⟨s⟩* Leb., Pars., Marc. : *siderea* P | *animus* ed. : *animus* P, retinet Leb. (“wenn es [das Leben] den Geist sich in die Sternenlücke auflösen lässt”) | *cum fu⟨g⟩it* (possis et *cum fu⟨lu⟨x⟩it*) Marc. : *quandoluit* P : *quum soluit* (sc. *vita*) Leb. : *quando exit* Pars. | *auras* P : *oras* Nisb. (conl. Boethii *Cons.* 4 *carm.* 6. 18) || 7 *quamvis scire* P : *quae nescire* Hutch. | *homini* Leb., Hutch., Nisb., Marc. : *hominis* P | *ni* Marc. : *sit* P, Leb. : *seu* Hutch., Nisb. | *futura ⟨est⟩* Nisb. : *futuri* P : *futura* Leb. || 8 *tortmentum (sit⟨n⟩)* Marc. : *tortmentumsit* P : *tortmentum sit, ⟨an⟩* Leb. : *tortmentum, siue* Hutch. Nisb. | *regna* Marc. (cf. v. 7 *vita* et vv. 13-14 *Acherontis . . . regna*; v. 61 *fratris Stygii regnum*) : *uitam* P : *vita* ed., agn. Leb., Pars. : *fata* Nisb. || 9 *aedelamen* P (ut vid.), corr. Leb., Pars. | *sinonte* P, corr. Leb., Pars. | *famolunquae* P, corr. ed. ||

SUCEPI PECUDUMQUE DUCEM POST CRIMINA DIVUM
ACCEPI IUSSI(QUE) IDEM DARE IUBILA SILVIS."

10

PR(A)ESCUS (H)EU P(A)EAN: "DOLEO, SED VERA FATEBO(R):
MORS VICINA PREMIT M(A)ESTIQUE AC(H)ERON(T)IS ADIRE
IAM PROPE REGNA TIBI GRATAMQUE RELINQUERE LUCEM.
SED VENIAT, PRO TE QUI MORTIS DAMNA SUBIRE
POSSIT ET INSTANTIS IN SE CONVERTERE CASUS,
TU POTERIS POSTHAC ALIENO VIVERE FATO.
IAM TIBI CUM GENITOR, GENETRIX CUM CAR(A) SUPERSIT
ET CONIUX NATIQUE RUDES, PETE, LUMINA PRO TE
QUI CLAUDAT FATIQUE TUO TUMULOQUE CREMETUR."

15

20

ILLE LAREM POST DICTA PETIT M(A)ESTUSQUE BEATO
IACTAT MEMBRA TORO ET FLETIBUS ATRIA CONPLET.

10 *post crimina divum* : cf. Stat. *Theb.* 6. 376 *sic Iovis imperia et nigrae voluere Sorores* (de Apollinis servitio); Lucian. *De sacrif.* 4 *καῖοστρακισθεῖς διὰ τοῦτο ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ* . . . (sc. Apollo) || **11** *accepi iussi(que) idem* : cf. Hygini *Fab.* 51. 2 *Apollo autem, quod ab eo* (sc. Admeto) *in servitudinem liberaliter esset acceptus*, . . . || **12** *sed vera fatebo(r)* / : Stat. *Ach.* 1. 146; Ov. *Heroid.* 8. 97 || **13** *mors vicina premit* : Lucian. 7. 50 *mortis vicinae properantis admovet horas*; Alcesta 53 sq. (Apollo): / *Disce tuum* . . . / *advenisse diem*; nam *lux inimica propinquat* | *m(a)estique Ac(h)eron(t)is* : Sil. It. 14. 243; cf. Lucan. 6. 782; *Culex* 273 *maesta* . . . *Ditis* . . . *regna* || **16** (*qui*) *possit* : i.q. *qui fortitudinem animumque habeat*; cf. Verg. *Aen.* 4. 418 sq. *hunc ego si potui tantum sperare dolorem, / et perferre, soror, potero*; Prop. 3. 12. 1 | *instantis* : cf. Alcesta 75 *fatoque urgenti incumbere* || **17** *alieno vivere fato* : cf. Ov. *Met.* 7. 168 *deme meis annis et demptos adde parenti*; Prop. 4. 11. 95 *quod mihi detractum est, vestros accedat ad annos*; Tibull. 1. 6. 63 sq. *proprius ego tecum, / sit modo fas, annos contribuuisse velim*; Stith Thompson, *Motif-Index* E165 || **18** : cf. Apollodor. *Bibl.* 1. 9. 15. 3 *ὥς δὲ ἦλθεν ἡ τοῦ θήσκειν ἡμέρα, μήτε τοῦ πατρὸς μήτε τῆς μητρὸς ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ* (sc. Ἀδμήτου) *θήσκειν θελόντων, Ἀλκυστος ὑπεραπέθανεν*; Hygin. *Fab.* 51. 3; Alcesta 66 *audiat haec genitor: patet atri ianua Ditis* || **21-22** *beato* . . . *toro* : Stat. *Silvae* 5. 1. 227 sq. || **22** *membra toro* : Verg. *Aen.* 6. 220; Sil. It. 6. 90; Stat. *Theb.* 2. 92; 2. 125 | *atria conplet* / : Ov. *Met.* 5. 153 ||

10 *sucepi* P : *suscepi* ed. | *pecudumque* P | *crimine* P, corr. ed. || **11** *iossi* (i corr. ex o) P, corr. ed. | *-que* add. Leb., Pars., Marc. | *post silvis* addit P f *apollo* in mg. dextra (i.e., notam personae loquentis) || **12** *prescius* P | *(h)eu* coni. Leb. : *eu* P : *en* Pars. : *hic* Leb., Hutch. (conl. v. 32) | *P(a)ean* Leb., Pars. (cf. v. 1) : *pian* P | *doleo* (o corr. ex u) P | *seo* . . . *fatebo* P, corr. ed. || **13** *post mors* addit inquit P, del. ed. | *vicinam* P | *m(a)estique* Hutch., Marc. : *m estumque* P : *m(a)estumque* Leb. | *aceronis* P, corr. ed. (p. 49) || **15** *subire* ed. : *subiret* P || **16** *possit* P : *poscat* olim Marc. | *casus* ed. : *casum* P || **17** *posthac* ed. : *posthaci* P (ut vid.) || **18** *qum* . . . *qum* P | *genitor* Leb., Pars., Marc. : *genitum* P | *car* P | *susupsit* P || **19** *-que* ed. : *quae* P || **20** *qui* ed. : *quae* P | *claudat* P : *linquat* Nisb. | *cremetur* P (cf. v. 48 *flammae*; v. 49 *ignis*; v. 116 *arsurosque*) : *prematur* Nisb. || **21** *m(a)estusque* Pars., Marc. : *mestumque* P, *m(a)estumque* Leb. (adverb.) | *beato* (b corr. ex u) P || **22** *toro et* : *hiatum* in caesura in vv. 35, 56 habes ||

AD NATUM GENITOR TRISTE(M) CONCURRIT ET ALTO
 PECTORE SUSPIRANS LACRIMIS (QUAE) CAUSA REQUIRIT.
 EDOCET ILLE PATREM FATORUM DAMNA SUORUM: 25
 "ME RAPIT, ECCE, DIES, GENITOR: PARA FUNERA NATO.
 HOC PARC(A)E DOCUERE NEFAS, HOC NOSTER APOLLO
 INVITUS, PATER, EDOCUIT. SE(D) REDDERE VITAM
 TU, GENITOR, TU, SANCTE, POTES, SI TEMPORA DONES,
 SI PRO ME MORTEM SUBITAM TUMULOSQUE SUBIRE 30
 DIGNE(R)IS NATOQUE TUA(M) CONCEDERE LUCEM."
 HIC GENITOR, NON UT GENITOR: "SI LUMINA POSCAS,
 CONCEDAM, GRATEQUE MANUM DE CORPORE NOSTRO,
 NATE, VELIS, TRIBUAM: VIVET MANUS ALTERA MECUM;
 SI SINE LUMINE (E)RO, ALIQUID TAMEN ESSE VIDEBOR: 35
 NIL ERO, SI QU(O)D SUM DONAVERO. QUANTA SENECT(A)E
 VITA MEAE SUPEREST, MINIMAM VI TOLLERE VI(S) IAM?
 QUAM PROPTER MEA REGNA DEDI TIBI, CASTRA RELIQUI.

23-24 *alto / pectore* : Verg. *Aen.* 6. 599 sq. | *alto pectore suspirans* : Ov. *Met.* 1. 655 sq.; cf. Sil. It. 9. 151 sq. *imo / pectore suspirans*; *Alcesta* 92 || 24 *lacrimis* : cf. Lucan 3. 607 *causam lacrimis* || 26 *dies* (sc. *mortis*) : *Alcesta* 53 sq. *disce tuum . . . / advenisse diem*; Verg. *Aen.* 10. 467; *Carm. Lat. Epigr.* 1522. 15 *Buecheler die sua peremptus*; Apollod. *Bibl.* 1. 9. 15. 3 | *funera nato* / : Ov. *Ibis* 583; Stat. *Theb.* 9. 365 || 27 *noster Apollo* / : Stat. *Theb.* 3. 628; Eur. *Bacchae* 1250 || 32-33 *si lumina poscas, / concedam, grateque manum* : cf. NT Mt. 5:29 sq. (J. K. Newman) || 33 *de corpore nostro* / : Iuv. 13. 92 || 36 *senect(a)e* : cf. *Alcestae* v. 73 *longaevio . . . parenti* (sc. *Admeti*) || 38 *castra reliqui* : i.q. *palatium meum tibi dedi*; cf. Iuv. 4. 135; *Hist. Aug. Hadrian.* 13 (Lebek); Claud. *In Honorii IV consul.* 10; Macrobian. *Sat.* 2. 4. 6; *CIL* VI. 8520; 33469; Lydi *De magistr.* 2. 30 | *castra reliqui* : Verg. *Aen.* 10. 604 ||

23 *triste(m)* Pars., Marc. : *triste* P, retinet Leb. (adverb.) || 24 *lacrimis (quae)* Nisb. : *lacrimarum* P, retinet Leb. | *causa* P : *causa(m)* Leb. | *requeret* P, corr. ed. || 25 *suorum* Leb. : *sorum* P, Oxon. || 26 *dies* Leb., Pars. : *uides* P | *genitur* (it ex corr.) P (cf. v. 29) | *para* (~) : cf. v. 6 *edoce* (~) | *nato*. P (finis versus) || 27 *Parc(a)e docuere nefas* Leb., Pars. : *parcedoquerenufas* P | *docuere* : *cecinere* Hutch., *dixere* Nisb. (at cf. v. 25 *edocet* : v. 28 *edocuit*; v. 113 *destringit* : v. 115 *destringit*) || 28 *se(d)* Leb., Pars. : *se* P | *reddere* ed. : *seddere* P (ut vid.) || 29 *admet(us)* addit P in mg. sinistra | *genitur* P (cf. v. 26) | *sanct(e)* P || 30 *tumulosque* Leb., Hutch., Nisb. : *tu'mulisque* P || 31 *digne(r)is natoque* ed. : *digneosnatosque* P | *tuam* Leb. : *tuo* P, retinent Oxon. | *lucem* (l ex corr.) P || 32 ante *si* addit *gens* P, del. Leb., Pars. | post *poscas* addit P f f *pat(er)* in mg. dextra || 33 *grateque* Hutch. : *gr atamque* P, Leb. || 34 *ue[[l]]is* P || 35 *lumine/r.o* P, corr. ed. || 36 *nihil* P, corr. ed. | *si quod sum* ed. : *sicutsuum* P | *senecte* P || 37 *vita meae* ed. : *uitameae* P : *extremae* Nisb. | *vi* Marc. : *uis* P | *vi(s)* iam? Marc. : *uitam* (i corr. ex s) P, retinent Oxon. : *v(i)s tu* Leb. || 38 *quam* ed. : *quem* P, retinet Leb. | *mea* Hutch. : *quea* P : del. ed. : *quia* Leb., Pars. | *regna* Leb., Pars. : *regnam* P : *regnum* ed. | *deds* P | *relin* qui P, corr. ed. ||

CONT(R)ISTANT TUMUL(I), (VI)TA QUIA DULCIUS UNA
NIL MIHI. POST MORTEM QUAM TU SI REDDERE POSSES,
(G)RATE CESSISSEM (NATO) TUMULOSQUE (H)ABITASSE(M),
VISURUS POST FATA DIEM."

40

PULSUS GENETRICIS

VOLVITUR ANTE PEDES, VESTIGIA BLANDUS ADORAT
INQUE SINUS FUNDIT LACRIMAS. FUGIT ILLA ROGANTEM,
NEC PIETATE, NOCENS, NEC VINCITUR INPROBA FLETU,
HAEC SUPER INPROPERANS: "OBLITA MENTE PARENTUM
TU, SCELERATE, POTES MATERNA(M) CERNERE MORTE(M),
TU TUMULIS GAUDERE MEIS? HAEC UBERA FLAMMAE
DIRIPIA(N)T, UTERUM(QUE) ROGI VIS ULTIMUS IGNIS
CONSUMAT, QUOD TE PEPERI(T), HOSTIS MIHI LUCIS,
HOSTIS, NATE, PATRIS? VITAM CONCEDERE VELLEM,
SI SEMPER POSSES TER(R)ENA SEDE MORARI.

45

50

43 *volvitur ante pedes* : Prop. 3. 8. 12 | *vestigia . . . adorat* / : cf. Stat. *Theb.* 12. 817
|| 45 : cf. *Alceste* 76 sq. *sed nullis ille* (sc. *Admeti pater*) *movetur* / *fletibus aut voces ulla*
tractabilis audit || 46 *inproperans* : cf. Petron. 38. 11; VT *Itala*: Sap. 2:12; Ps. 73:10;
Pastoris Hermiae vers. vulg. 2. 2 || 49 *ultimus ignis* : Sen. *Herc. Oet.* 1609; Quint. *Declam.*
6. 2 || 51 : cf. Verg. *Aen.* 11. 111 *et vivis concedere vellem* / || 52 *sede morari* / : cf. Ov.
Met. 2. 846 || 53 *Cur metui(s) mortem, cui nascimur?* : cf., e.g., Sen. *Ad Marciam* 10. 5
mors enim illi (sc. *filio tuo*) *denuntiata nascenti est; in hanc legem erat satus, hoc illum fatum*
ab utero statim prosequabatur; Eurip. *Alc.* 418 sq. *γίγνωσκε δὲ* (sc. *Ἄδμητῇ*) / *ὥς πᾶσιν*
ἡμῖν καθανείν ὀφείλεται ||

39 *cont(r)istant tumul(i)* Leb. : *contustanttumul* P : *combusta . . . (dulcior urna)* / Pars.
| *(vi)ta quia* Marc. (cf. v. 37 *vitae* P) : *tae* (e ex corr.) *quam* (a ex corr.) P : *nec vita*
Leb. | *dulcius una* Hutch. : *dulciorullam* P : *dulcior ulla* Leb. : *dulcior urna* Pars. || 40
nil ed. (cf. v. 36) : *nil* P : *(res)* add. et *[nil]* del. Leb. (i.e., *nec vita dulcior ulla /*
res mihi) | *si ed.* : *fi* P : *sic* Pars. | *posses* Hutch. : *uellis* P : *velles ed.*, agn. Leb., Pars.
|| 41 *(g)rate cessissem (nato)* Marc. (cf. v. 33 *grateque*; v. 73 *libens*) : *natetuoconcessissem*
P : *nate, diu concessissem* Leb. : *nate, tibi cessisse velim* Hutch. (*cessisse velim* Nisb.) |
tumulosque ed. : *edtumulusque* P | *(h)abitasse(m)* Leb., Marc. : *abitasse* P (*hab-* ed.) ||
42 *diu(m)* P || *pulsusque* P, corr. ed. || 43 *darte* P | *blandus* Leb., Hutch., Nisb., Marc.
: *"d"landus* (i.e., *sive vlandus sive adulandus*) P || 44 *inque* (u corr. ex n) P | *lacrimas*
Leb., Hutch., Marc. : *lacrimum* P : *lacrimam ed.*, Pars. | *fugit* P || 45 *pietatem* P, corr.
Leb., Pars. | *fletus* P, corr. ed. || 46 *oblita* Hutch. : *oblitus* P, retinet Leb. || 47 *ante tu*
notam personae mater addit P in mg. sinistra | *maternacerneremorte* P, corr. Leb., Pars.,
Marc. : *materna vivere morte* Nisb. || 48 *ubira flam.mae* (finis versus) P || 49 *diripia(n)t*
Leb., Hutch. : *deripiat* P (-nt ed.) | *-que* add. Leb., Pars. | *rogi* Pars. : *cogis* P : *rogis*
Leb. | *uis.* P || 50 *consumad* P | *quod te peperit(t)* Marc., Leb. : *quodtepeperi* P : *quo te*
peperi Leb., Newman : *qui te peperit(t)* Pars. | *mihi lucis* Marc. : *meaelucis* P : *genetricis*
Leb., Nisb. || 51 *natae* P || 52 *semper* P : *superum* Hutch. | *posses* Leb., Hutch. : *possis*
P | *ter(r)ena* Marc. : *a.eternam* P, retinet Leb. ("wenn du immer dem Grabe fernbleiben
könntest!"), vix recte : *aeterna ed.* : *corruptum* Pars. : *aeternum* Hutch. : *terrarum*
Nisb. | *sede* P : *sede(m)* Leb. | *murari* P ||

CUR METUI(S) MORTEM, CUI NASCIMUR? EFFUGE LONGE,
 QUO PART(H)US, QUO MEDUS ARABS(QUE); UBI BARBARUS ALES
 NASCITUR, AC NOBIS ITERATUS FINGITUR ORBIS;
 ILLIC, NATE, LATE: (IBI) TE TUA FATA SEQUENTUR.
 PERPETUUM NIHIL EST, NIHIL EST SINE MORTE CREATUM:
 LUX RAPITUR ET NOX ORITUR, MORIUNTUR ET ANNI;
 NON EST TERRA LOCO, QUO (R)ES GENERAVERAT ANTE.

55

IPSE PATER MUNDI FERTUR TUMULATUS ABISSE
 ET FRATRI(S) STYGII REGNUM MUTATUS OBISSE;
 BACC(H)UM FAMA REFERT (T)ITA(NU)M EX ARTE PERISSE,
 PER(QUE) VADUM LETHE(S) CEREREM VENEREMQUE SUBISSE.

60

54 : cf., e.g., Catull. 11. 2-8 || 54-55 *ubi barbarus ales / nascitur, ac nobis iteratus fingitur orbis* : de avis phoenicis magno anno (annorum vertentium 1461 vel 1000 vel 500) agit poeta; cf. Plin. *N.H.* 10. 5 *cum huius alitis* (sc. *phoenicis*) *vita magni conversionem anni fieri*; 29. 29; Tac. *Ann.* 6. 28; Lact. *De ave phoen.* 59-64; Claud. *Carm. min.* 27. 104 sq. *te* (sc. *phoenice*) *saecula teste / cuncta revolvuntur*; Clem. *Rom. Ep. ad Cor.* 25 s.f.; Herodot. 2. 73 || 56 *fata sequentur* / : Sil. *It.* 8. 38; Prop. 2. 22. 19 || 60-63 *abisse / . . . obisse / . . . perisse / . . . subisse* / : cf., e.g., *Carm. Lat. Epigr.* 500. 4-7 Buecheler *meruisti / . . . timuisti / . . . tacuisti / . . . obisti* / ; Anth. *Lat.* 1. 1 No. 273. 5-11 Riese *ligemus / . . . metamus / . . . necemus / . . . perimamus / . . . crememus / . . . necemus / . . . volemus* / (Lebek); Verg. *Aen.* 4. 603-06 || 61 *fratri(s) Stygii* : Verg. *Aen.* 9. 104; 10. 113 || 62 (T)ita(nu)m ex arte perisse : cf. Clem. *Protrept.* 17. 2 δόλω δὲ ὑποδύντων Τιτάνων, ἀπατήσαντες παυδαριώδεσιν ἀθύρμασιν, οὗτοι δὲ οἱ Τιτᾶνες διέσπασαν (sc. *Bacchum*) (Lebek); Arnob. *Adv. nat.* 5. 19 *ut occupatus puerilibus ludicris distractus ab Titanis Liber sit, ut ab isdem membratim sectus . . .* || 63 *vadum Lethe(s)* : Sen. *Herc. Fur.* 680 *placido quieta labitur Lethe vado* ||

53 *sur P* | *metui P*, corr. *Leb.*, *Pars.*, *Marc.* | *quicui P*, corr. *Leb.*, *Pars.*, *Marc.* | *effugaealongae P*, corr. *Leb.*, *Pars.*, *Marc.* || 54 *Part(h)us, quo Pars.* : *partusque P* : *Partus[que]* ed., *Leb.* | *Medus Arabs(que)* ed. : *medusarabs P* : *Medus(que et) Arabs Leb.* : *mollis Arabs Nisb.* || 55 *nascitur, ac nobis iteratus fingitur orbis Marc.* (*nobis fingitur = homines fingunt*) : *nascitur adque nobis iteratum cingitur* (c corr. ex u, ut vid.) *urbis P* : *nascitur adque novos iteratum fingitur ortus Leb.* ("wo der barbarische Phönixvogel geboren wird und wiederum zu neuer Geburt gebildet wird") : *nascitur atque novis iteratus cingitur urbis* Pars. : *stinguitur atque novis iteratus nascitur orsis Hutch., Nisb.* : . . . *fingitur orbis* ed. : *conditur aris coni. Pars.* (concl. Claud. *Carm. min.* 27. 94) || 56 *late: (ibi) te Marc.* (cf. *hiatum* in vv. 22; 35) : *latete P* : *late, (sed) te Hutch., agn. Leb.* : *late, (at) te Pars.* || 59 *loco, quo (r)es generaverat Marc.* (*loco = statu, gradu*) : *locus* (cf. v. 2) *quo se generab'erat P* : *loco* (Pars.) *quo se generaverat* (*secreverat Nisb.*) *Oxon.* (*non intellego*) : *non est terra locos, quos egeneraverat ante?* Leb. ("Verschlingt nicht die Erde die Orte, die sie zuvor hervorgebracht hatte?"), concl. Plin. *Hist. nat.* 2. 205 *ipsa se comest terra, vix recte* || 60 *ante ipse addit P poe(ta)* in mg. *sinistra* || 61 *fratre P*, corr. ed. | *Stygii Hutch., Nisb.* (confer test.) : *stygium P*, retinet *Leb.* | *mutatus Hutch., Marc.* : *multatus P*, retinet *Leb.* || 62 *baccum P, Leb.* | (T)ita(nu)m ex arte *Marc.* (*de et ex confundere videtur P*: vv. 95; 103) : *itamdearte P* : *Titanum marte Pars.* : (T)itanide (ab) arte *Leb.* (*qui etiam (sub)ita de (m)orte temptabat*) || 63 *per(que) vadum Leb., Pars.* : *pervadam P* : *per vada* ed. | *Lethe(s) Hutch.* : *lechi P* : *lethi Leb.* : *leti Pars.* ||

CUR EGO DE NATO DOLEAM, QUEM FATA REPOSCUNT?	
CUR EGO NON PLANGAM, SICUT PLANXERE PRIORES?	65
AMISIT NATUM DIOMEDE, CARPSIT AGAE;	
PERDIDIT ALT(HA)EA (G)NATUM, DEA PERDIDIT INO;	
FLEVIT ITYN PROGNE, DUM COLLIGIT ILIA CRUDA.	68
NAM QU(A)ECUMQUE TEGIT (CA)ELI V(I)S VEL VAGUS AER	70
LABUNTUR CEDUNT MORIUNTUR CONTUMULANTUR."	69
CONIUGIS UT TALIS VIDIT PELIEIA FLETUS,	
"ME, (ME) TRADE NECI, ME, CONIUX, TRADE SEPULCRIS,"	
EXCLAMAT. "CONCEDO LIBENS, EGO TEMPORA DONO,	
ADMETE, (AD)VENTURA TIBI, PRO CONIUGE CONIUX.	
SI VINCO MATREM, VINCO PIETATE PARENTEM,	75
SI M(OR)IOR, LAUS MAGNA MEI POST FUNERA NOSTRA.	

64 *fata reposcunt* / : Prop. 2. 1. 71; Ov. Met. 13. 180; cf. Alcestae v. 82 sq. *stat sua cuique dies . . . / utere sorte tua: patet atri ianua Ditis* || **68** *flevit Ityn Progne* : Hor. Carm. 4. 12. 5 sq.; Mart. 10. 51. 4; Ov. Amor. 3. 12. 32 = Heroid. 15. 154 || **70** (ca)eli v(i)s : Ov. Met. 1. 26 *igneae convexi vis et sine pondere caeli* | *vagus aer* : Tibull. 3. 7. 21; (Catull. 65. 17) || **72** *trade neci* : Verg. Georg. 4. 90; Ov. Fast. 4. 840 *dede neci* || **73** *libens* : cf. Hygini Fab. 51. 3 . . . *ut pro se (sc. Admeto) alius voluntarie moreretur. Pro quo cum neque pater neque mater mori voluisset, uxor se Alcestis obtulit et pro eo vicaria morte interiit*; Apollod. Bibl. 1. 9. 15. 2 *ἀν ἐκουσίως τις ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ θηήσκειν ἔληται* || **74** *pro coniuge coniux* / : Ov. Met. 7. 589; Heroid. 3. 37 || **76** *laus magna mei* : cf. Alcestae v. 154 *aeternam moriens famam tam certa tulisti (sc. Alcestis)* | *funera nostra* : Prop. 2. 1. 56 ||

64 *reposcunt* Leb., Nisb. : *deposcunt* P || **66** *admisit* P, corr. ed. | *Diomede* Pars. (scil. mater Hyacinthi Hutch.) : *diomedes* P : *Clymene* Leb. | *carpsit* P : *discerpsit* Leb. | *Agae* Leb., Pars. : *acatem* P || **67** *perdedit bis* P | *Alt(ha)ea* ed. : *alpea* P : *Althaeae* Hutch. | (g)natum Marc. : *natum* P | *Ino* Leb., Nisb. : *ion* P || **68** *flevit* corr. ex *eleliit* P (ut vid.) | *Ityn* Leb., Pars., Marc. : *etin* P | *Progne* Leb., Pars. (*Procne*), Marc. : *prigne* P | *dum* Marc. : *et* P : *quem* Hutch. | *colligit* P : *concinit* Leb. | *ilia cruda* Marc. : *illa cruentus* P : *illa cruentum* Leb. : *ipsa cruentum* Pars. || **70**, **69** : *huic illum versum praeposuit* Pars. || **70** *quecumque* P | *tegit* (ca)eli v(i)s Leb. (confl. Ovid. Met. 1. 26) : *legitillius* P : *gerit* Hutch. et *tellus* Pars. et (mare) add. Hutch., Nisb. || **69** *cedunt* Leb., Pars., Marc. : *precedunt* P : *pereunt* Nisb. | *contumulantur* P (finis versus) || **71** *Pelieia* Hutch. : *peleide* P : *Pelia edita* Leb. || **72** *ante me* notam personae x *alcestis* addit P in mg. sinistra | *me* (me) Hutch., Pars. (confl. Verg. Aen. 9. 427) : *me* P | *post me* addit *inquit* P, del. Hutch., Pars., agn. Leb., Marc. : *inquit* ed. | *neci* Leb., Marc. : *niquid* P : *inquit* ed., agn. Oxon. | *sepulcris* P || **73** *exclamat* Leb. (confl. v. 123) : *exclamans* P, retinet Oxon. | *libiens* P || **74** (ad)ventura Marc. (cf. Admete) : *ventura* P, retinet Leb. : (e)ventura Nisb. || **75** *si* P : *si* (c) Leb., Nisb. | *parentem* Hutch., Nisb., Marc. : *parentis* P, retinet Leb. ("die Eltern") || **76** *m(or)ior* Leb., Hutch., Marc. : *meor* P : *m(or)iar* ed. | *mei* P : *mihi* Nisb. | *funera nostra* ed. : *funeremostro* P : *funera restat* Nisbet, agn. Oxon. ||

NON ERO, SED FACTUM TOTIS NARRABITUR ANNIS,
 ET CONIUX PIA SEMPER ERO. NON TRISTIOR ATROS
 ASPICIAM VULTUS, NEC TOTO TEMPORE FLEBO,
 DUM CINERES SERVABO TUOS. LACRIMOSA RECEDAT 80
 VITA PROCUL: MORS ISTA PLACET. ME TRADE SEPULCRIS,
 ME PORTET MELIUS NIGRO VELAMINE PO<R>T<H>MEUS.

HOC TANTUM MORITURA ROGO, NE POST MEA FATA
 DULCIOR ULLA TIBI, VESTIGIA NE MEA CONIUX
 CARIOR ISTA LEGAT. ET TU, NE<C> NOMINE TANTUM, 85
 ME COLE, MEQUE PUTA TECUM SUB NOCTE IACERE.

IN GREMIO CINERES NOSTROS DIGNARE TENERE,
 NEC TIMIDA TRACTARE MANU, SUDARE FA<V>IL<L>AS
 UNGUENTO, TITULUMQUE NOVO PR<A>ECINGERE FLORE.

77 : cf. Ov. Met. 14. 435 || 78-79 *atros* . . . *vultus* : cf. Hor. Epist. 1. 19. 12 || 82 *nigro velamine* : cf. Ov. Met. 11. 611 | *Po<R>t<H>meus* : i.q. *portitor* Charon: Petron. 121 v. 117; Iuv. 3. 266; Carm. Lat. Epigr. 1549. 3 || 83 *moritura rogo* : Eurip. Alc. 300 αἰτήσομαι γάρ σ'; 308 αἰτοῦμαι σ' ἐγώ; Alceste 124 *adiuro* (sc. te) et *repetens iterumque iterumque monebo* || 84-85 (ne) *dulcior ulla tibi* . . . *ne* . . . *coniux / carior* : cf. Eurip. Alc. 305 καὶ μὴ 'πιγῆμης τοῖσδε μητρὶνὰ τέκνους . . . ; Alcestae vv. 125 sq. *castum servare cubile / sis memor*; 127 sq. *lectumque iugalem / natis parce tuis* | *coniux* . . . *carior* : cf. Ov. Trist. 5. 14. 2 || 86 *meque puta tecum sub nocte iacere* : cf. Prop. 4. 11. 81-84:

sat tibi sint noctes, quas de me, Paulle, fatiges,
 somniaque in faciem credita saepe meam:
 atque ubi secreto nostra ad simulcra loqueris,
 ut responsurae singula verba iace.

Hygini Fab. 104. 1 *itaque fecit* (sc. Laodamia) *simulacrum aereum simile Protesilai coniugis et in thalamis posuit sub simulatione sacrorum, et eum colere coepit. Quod cum famulus . . . per rimam aspexit viditque eam ab amplexu Protesilai simulacrum tenentem atque osculantem* . . . ; Apollodori Epitome 3. 30 καὶ ποιήσασα (sc. Λαοδάμεια) εἰδῶλον Πρωτεσίλαφ παραπλήσιον τούτῳ προσωμίλει; Eustath. ad Iliad. 2. 701 (p. 325. 25 = 1, p. 507. 3 van der Valk) εἶδεν (sc. Πρωτεσίλαος) ἐκείνην (sc. Λαοδάμειαν) ἀγάλματι αὐτοῦ περικειμένην; 325. 30 = 507. 8 ἀλλὰ κατεχομένη ἐνυκτέρευε μετὰ τοῦ ἀνδρός, μᾶλλον αἰρουμένη τὴν πρὸς τὸν τεθνεῶτα, φασί, συνουσίαν ἢ τὴν πρὸς τοὺς ζῶντας ὁμίλιαν || 88 *tractare manu* : Stat. Silvae 5. 1. 88 ||

78 *tristior atos* ed. : *trustioratus* P : *tristis* Nisb. et *amatos* Hutch. || 79 *uultus* P : *cultus* Nisb. | *nec* Marc. : *non* P | *flebo* P (finis versus) || 80 *dum* Marc. : *aut* P | *recedat* Leb., Hutch., Nisb. : *recedam* P || 81 *procum* P | *traderepulcris* P, corr. ed. || 82 *po<R>t<H>meus* Pars., Leb. (*po<R>tmeus*) : *potneus* P || 84 *ulla* P | *tibi* P : *adeat* Hutch. | *uestigiam* P | *mea, coniux, interpungit* Leb. ("Gatte!") || 85 *legat* Leb., Marc. : *legat* P, retinent Oxon. | *ne<C>* Nisb. : *me* P || 87 *cineres* Leb. : *cineris* P, retinent Oxon. (at cf. v. 80 *cineres*) | *dignare tenere* Leb., Pars. : *neuedignaretinere* (i.e., *neve digna retinere*) P || 88 *tractare* P | *sudare fa<v>il<L>as unguento* Leb., Marc. : *sudarefailasunguentum* P : *stillare* (Hutch.) *favillis* (ed.) *unguentum* Oxon. || 89 *titolumque* P | *precingere* P ||

SI REDEUNT UMBR(A)E, VENIAM TECUM(QUE) IACEBO.	90
QUALISCUMQUE TAMEN, CONIUX, NE DESERA(R) A TE, NEC DOLEAM DE ME, QUOD VITAM DESERO PRO TE.	
ANTE OMNES COMMENDO TIBI PIA PIGNORA NATOS, PIGNORA, QUAE SOLO DE TE FECUNDA CREAVI, EX TE SIC NULLAS HABE(A)T MORS ISTA QUERELLAS.	95
NON PEREO, NEC ENIM MORIOR: ME, CREDE, RESERVO, QUAE MIHI TAM SIMILES NATOS MORITURA RELINQUO.	
QUOS, ROGO, NE PARVOS MAN(U)S INDIGNA(ND)A NOVERCAE PRODAT, ET (H)EU FLENTES MATRIS PIA VINDICET UMBRA.	
SI ME DISSIMULES, SI NON MEA DULCIS IMAGO PAULUM AD TE VENI(AT) . . .	100

90 *si redeunt umbr(a)e, veniam tecum(que) iacebo* : cf. Prop. 4. 7. 3 sq. *Cynthia namque meo visa est incumbere fulcro* / . . . *nuper humata*; 89 *nocte vagae ferimur, nox clausas liberat umbras* || 93 *ante omnes* : Verg. Aen. 6. 667 | *commendo tibi pia pignora natos* : Prop. 4. 11. 73 *Nunc tibi commendo communia pignora natos* || 94 *solo de te* : cf. Prop. 4. 11. 36 *in lapide hoc uni nupta fuisse legar* || 98-99 *quos . . . ne parvos man(u)s indigna(nda) novercae* / *prodat* : cf. Eurip. Alc. 305-10

. . . καὶ μὴ 'πιγῆμης τοῖσδε μητρικῶν τέκνοις,

ἥτις κακίων οὐσ' ἐμοῦ γυνῆ φθόνῳ

τοῖς σοῖσι καμῶις παισὶ χεῖρα προσβαλεῖ . . .

Prop. 4. 11. 85-90; Alceste 127 sq. || 99 *matris pia vindicet umbra* : Stith Thompson, *Motif-Index* E221. 2. 1; E323.2; cf. Prop. 4. 11. 74 *haec cura (sc.natorum) et cineri spirat inusta meo* || 100 *si me dissimules* : cf. Ov. Ex Ponto 1. 2. 146 *non potes hanc (sc. coniugem meam) salva dissimulare fide* | *dulcis imago* / : Stat. Silvae 1. 2. 112; Theb. 5. 608; (Verg. Aen. 6. 695) || 101 *post (si non) . . . paulum ad te veni(at)* *exspectes talia verba: Sequar atris ignibus absens (sc. Dido Aeneas) / et, cum frigida mors anima seduxerit artus, / omnibus umbra locis adero. Dabis, improbe, poenas.* Verg. Aen. 4. 384-86; cf. 520 sq. ||

90 [[de]]redeunt P | umbre P | ueniam tecum sub nocte iacebo P : veniam tecum(que) [sub nocte, cf. v. 86] iacebo Hutch., Marc. : [veniam] tecum sub nocte iacebo ed., agn. Leb. || 91 -quae P | tamen. P | desera(r) ed. : desere P || versus 92 ante 91 transponit Hutch., tum 92 *ne doleas de me* Pars., Nisb. || 92 quid P | desero Leb., Nisb. : degero P || 93 omnes Nisb., Marc. : omnem P | commen.do P || 94 te (t additum) P || 95 ex Marc. : de P, omnes (de te: sic interpungunt Oxon. : de te sic Leb., "So möge von dir aus dieser Tod keinerlei Klagen in sich bergen!") | habe(a)t Leb., Pars., Marc. : habet P | quaerellam P || 96 pereor P | moreor P | me crede reseruo P : mi crede, reservo(r) ed., agn. Oxon. || 97 mihi Nisb. : tibi P || 98 mans P, corr. ed. | indigna(nda) R. Kassel (per litteras) : indigna P || 99 prodat, et (h)eu Marc. : proderentet P : proderet, et ed., agn. Leb. : verberet et Nisb. (qui etiam terreat et temptabat) || 100 *si me dissimules, si Marc. : si tibi dissimiles hoc P, ret. Leb. ("Wenn du dir dies vernachlässigen solltest, dann kommt nicht mein süßes Bild ein wenig in der Nacht") : si tibi dissimiles, si Hutch. | dulcis. / simago P || 101 paulum P rursus Nisb. | ad te Marc. : nate P (ut vid.) : no(c)te ed., agn. omnes | veni(at) Marc. : ueni P : veni(t) Leb., Pars. (sine lacuna) | post veni(at) lacunam, uxoris oblitae vindictam continentem, statuit Marc.* ||

. . . ET TU PRO CONIUGE CARA

DISCE MORI, DE M(E) DISCE EXEMPLU(M) PIETATIS.”

IAM VAGA SIDERIBUS NOX PINGEBATUR ET ALES
RORE SOPORIFERO CONPLEVE(RA)T OMNIA SOMNUS:
AD MORTEM PROPERANS, IN CONIUGE FIXA IACEBAT
ALCESTIS LACRIMASQ(UE) VIRI PERITURA VIDEBAT.
PLANGERE SAEPE IUBET SESE NATOSQUE VIRUMQUE,
DISPONIT FAMULOS, CONPONIT IN ORDINE FUNUS
L(A)ETA SIBI: PICTOSQUE TOROS VARIOSQUE PA(RATUS) . . .

105

110

†. . . ONES†

BARBARICAS FRONDES (ET) ODORES, TURA CROCUMQUE.
PALLIDA SUDANTI DESTRINGIT BALSAMA VIRGA,

103 : cf. Sil. It. 5. 638-40 / *disce ex me pugnās, vel (si pugnare negatum) / disce mori: dabit exemplum non vile futuris / Flaminius* || **104-05** : cf. Verg. Aen. 4. 522 *Nox erat et placidum carpebant fessa soporem / corpora per terras . . . 529 at non infelix animi Phoenissa*; 3. 147 *Nox erat et terris animalia somnus habebat*; 2. 8 sq. | *ales* / . . . *Somnus* : Stat. Theb. 10. 302 *deus aliger* (sc. *Somnus*) || **107** : cf. Ov. Heroid. 10. 119 *nec lacrimas matris moritura videbo* || **109** *disponit* : de testatorum voluntate, cf. TLL V. 1427. 20 sq.; e.g., Vulg. 2 Reg. 17:23 *disposita domo sua . . . interiit* || **110** *pictosque toros* : Ov. Heroid. 12. 30; Verg. Aen. 1. 708; 4. 206 sq. | *pa(ratus)* : cf. Ov. Fast. 3. 627 *Tyrios induta paratus* / || **112** *frondes* : cf. Verg. Aen. 4. 506 sq. || *odores, tura crocumque* : cf. Verg. Georg. 1. 56 sq. *Nonne vides, croceos ut Tmolus odores, / India mittit ebur, molles sua tura Sabaei . . . ?* || **113** *sudanti . . . balsama virga* : Verg. Georg. 2. 118 sq. *Quid tibi odorato referam sudantia ligno / balsama . . . ?*; Iustini Hist. 36. 3. 4 *arbores opobalsami certo anni tempore balsamum sudant*; Tac. Germ. 45. 7 *ubi* (sc. in Oriente) *tura balsamaque sudantur*; Prudent. Cathemer. 5. 117 *illic et gracili balsama surculo desudata fluunt*; Hieron. Epist. 107. 1-2 *ut . . . viles virgulae balsama pretiosa sudarent* (Lebek) ||

102 *cara* Nisb., Marc. : *caro* P, retinet Leb. (sc. “*et tu, lector*”) || **103** *de m(e) disce exemplum* Nisb. : *disce ex m exempla* P : <tu> *disce exempla ex m(e)* Hutch. || **104** *ante iam addit P poet(a)* in mg. sinistra | *ales* Pars. : *alis* P || **105** *sopordfero* P | *conpleve(r)a*t . . . *Somnus* Pars. : *conplebent . . . somnum* P || **106** *mortem*. P | *prope.rans* P | *coniuge* P | *iacebat* P || **107** *alcestem*. P, corr. ed. | *-q(ue) viri* Leb., Hutch., Nisb. : *quiri* P || **108** *plangere* P || **109** *famulos* (u corr. ex o) P || **110** *l(a)eta* Leb., Pars. : *leta* P | *pictusque* P, corr. ed. | post *variosque* lacunam statuit Hutch. : post *pa(ratus)* Marc. | *pa(ratus)* / . . . †ones† Marc. : *paones* P : *paratus* (sine lacuna) Leb. : <ta>petas / Nisb. et . . . <re>ponens / Pars. || **112** *barbaricas* (corr. ex *uaruar-*) P : *Arabicas* Nisb. (at cf. v. 54) | <et> *odores* Leb., Hutch., Nisb., Marc. : *oduresque* P | *crucumque* P || **113** *pallida* Pars., Marc. : *pa.llada* P : *Pallada* Leb. (“Öl streift sie vom balsamtriefenden Zweig”) | *dstringit* Leb. : *dstringit* (d corr. ex u) P : corruptum Oxon. : *destillat* Nisb. | *palsama* P ||

EREPTUM NIDO PR(A)ECIDIT PULVER AMOMI,
ARIDA PURPUREIS DESTRINGIT CINNAMA RAMIS,
ARSUROSQUE OMNES SECUM DISPONIT ODORES.

115

⟨H⟩ORA PROPINQUABAT LUCEM RA(P)TURA PUELLAE,
TRACTAVITQUE MANU: RIGOR OMNIA CORRIPIEBAT.
C(A)ERULEOS UNGUES OCULIS MORITURA NOTABAT
ALGENTISQUE PEDES, FATALI FRIGORE PRESSOS.
ADMETI IN GREMIU(M) REFUGIT FUGIENTIS IMAGO.
UT VIDIT SENSUS ⟨LABI⟩, "DULCISIME CONIUX,"
EXCLAMAT, "RAPIOR: VENIT, MORS ULTIMA VENIT,
INFERNUSQUE DEUS CLAUDIT ⟨MEA⟩ MEMBRA SOPORE."

120

114 *nido* . . . *pulver amomi* : Plin. *N.H.* 12. 85 *Cinnamomum et casias fabulose narravit antiquitas princepsque Herodotus* [3. 111] *avium nidis* . . . *ex inviis rupibus arboribusque decuti* . . . (Oxon.) | *pulver* (neutro genere) : *Carm. Lat. Epigr.* 2222 = *CIL* VIII. 7277 *haec via tale pulver habet*; Anon. *med. ed.* Piechotta 119; *Hippiatr. Gr.* I, p. 390. 21; 419. 5 O.-H. (Lebek) || **117** *Hora* (sc. *mortis*) : cf. *TLL* VI. 2963. 30-57 || **118** *rigor omnia corripiebat* : cf. Sil. It. 4. 456 *corripuit pallor*; *Alcesta* 133 = Verg. *Aen.* 4. 499 *Haec effata silet, pallor simul occupat ora*; 161 sq. *Cui talia fanti / dilapsus color atque in ventos vita recessit* || **121** *fugientis imago* / : Verg. *Aen.* 10. 656 *Aeneae fugientis imago* / ; Sil. It. 17. 644 *Hannibalis campis fugientis imago* / || **122** *Dulcissime coniux* : *Alcesta* 87 *o pulcherrime coniux* / ; 118 = 125 / *O dulcis coniux* || **123** : cf. *Alcestae* v. 161 "*Tempus,*" ait (sc. *Alcestis*), "*deus, ecce deus!*" || **124** *membra sopore* / : *Lucr.* 3. 453; Sil. It. 3. 170; Verg. *Aen.* 8. 406

114 *nido* P, retinet Oxon. conl. Plin. *Hist. nat.* 12. 85 | *precidit* P | *pulver* P (neutro genere), retinet Leb. : †*pulver*† Oxon. : *culmen* Nisb. || **115** *pur'p.ureis* P | *destringit* Leb., Hutch. : *distingit* P (cf. v. 113) || **116** *arsurusque* P | *desponit* P || **117** *ora* P, corr. ed. | *ratura* P || **118** *tractavitque manu* (sc. *Hora mortis*) Marc. (cf. v. 88) : *tractabatque manos* P : *tractabatque manus* ed. : *corruptum* Oxon. : *attractansque vel frigeabantque manus* Nisb. | *omnia* (sc. *membra*) P : *extima* Nisb. | *corripiebat* Nisb. : *diripiebat* P, retinet Leb. : *praeripiebat* Hutch. || **119** *ceruleos* P | *oculos* P, corr. ed. | *moritura* P (cf. vv. 83; 97; 107) : *moribunda* Nisb. || **120** *algentisque* P | *pressos* Hutch., Marc. : *pressum* P : *pressos* Nisb. : *pressa* Pars. : *pressam* Leb. ("Aus ihr, die von Todeskälte im Schoss Admets bedrängt wurde, flieht das Bild der Fliehenden") || **121** *admeti* P (cf. vv. 4; 74) : *coniugis* Hutch. | *gremium* Hutch. : *gremio* P, retinet Leb. | *post imago addit* P ff— *alcestis* in mg. *dextra* || **122** *uidit* P : *cedit* coni. Hutch. | *sensus* : in P *litterae nus* *lineola transfixae* | *labi* add. Hutch. | *ante dulcissime* addit P *coniux ex* (x ex corr.) : *ut dissographiam* del. ed. et Hutch. || **123** *rapeor* P | *moris* P || **124** *inferiusque* P | *claudit* Leb., Hutch., Nisb., Marc. : *claudet* P : *condit* coni. Hutch., Nisb., Pars. | ⟨*mea*⟩ suppl. ed. : *vacat spatium trium litt.* in P : *mihi* suppl. Hutch. | *sembra soporem* P, corr. ed. || *finem carminis deesse* credit Hutch.

Translation

ALCESTIS

"O, Delian Paean, son of Latona! O prescient Lord of laurels! I invoke you along with the laurels select because of your name. O, Bow-bearer, grant me to know the day of my death; grant me to learn when the Fates will break the life-thread of Admetus! Tell me, what will be the end of my life, and what Destiny may have in store for me once my spirit has gone into the starry sphere. I know, unless a man's life after death is a blessed one, it is anguish for him to know this (is it going to be a life without light, a realm of shadows?). Nevertheless, tell me, if I worshiped you ever; if I ever offered you support when you came to me as a terrified servant after the gods' charge against you; if I ever accepted you to be my herdsman, and sent you to the forests to raise shouts of joy!"

(12) Alas! Such was the answer of the prescient Paean: "I grieve for you, but I must tell the truth. Death is pressing upon you: the time is close for you to abandon the dear light of day and approach the gloomy realm of Acheron. However, should somebody come forward having the heart to suffer death for you, to take on himself your impending misfortune, you will be granted henceforth to live the destiny of somebody else. Why, your father, your dear mother are still alive; and so are your wife and your young sons: go and ask them who may be willing to shut his eyes forever for you, to be burnt on the pyre as a substitute for your fate and grave."

(21) Having learnt this, Admetus withdraws to his home. Stricken with grief he cannot help tossing his limbs on the rich couch, and his weeping reaches every corner of the palace. The father hurries to his sorrowful son, and sighing from the depth of his breast asks him the reason for these tears. The son tells his father about his decreed death: "Father, my day of death is carrying me away: prepare a funeral for your son! This awful mishap was revealed by the Fates, it was reluctantly revealed by our Apollo. But you, father, you, venerable one, can restore my life, if you only would donate the rest of your days to me; if you would deign to grant your own life to your son, to suffer sudden death and approach the tomb for me."

(32) Hear now the father speaking unlike a father! "Should you ask me for my eyes, I would grant them to you. Should you want a hand from my body, my son, I would gladly give it to you. Still I would be left with the other hand, and though deprived of sight, I would still have the appearance of a living being. But if I grant you my very being, there will be nothing left of me. Little life is left to

my old age: are you after even this little, to snatch it away before its time? Why, it was to enjoy this brief life that I have given my kingdom to you, that I have left my court to you. Of the grave I dare not think: there is nothing sweeter to my heart than life alone. I would gladly yield to my son's wish and go to the grave for him, if only you had the power of restoring my life after death, enabling me to see the daylight again!"

(42) Rejected by his father, Admetus throws himself before the feet of his mother, embraces them in reverence and adulation, and sheds tears in her lap. But she, in her wickedness, shuns the suppliant. She, the heartless one, would be won neither by imploration nor by the sense of maternal duty. Worse still, she starts casting reproaches: "Are you out of your mind, you criminal wretch? How can you forget your duty toward your parents? How can you watch the death of your own mother and enjoy seeing her tomb? Is that what you want—that the flames of the pyre devour these breasts, that the final funeral pile take away the very womb which gave you birth? You, son, a foe to my lifelight, a foe to your own father! Still, I would gladly give my life for you if only I were sure you could remain on earth forever!

(53) "Why are you afraid of death for which we all are born? Escape to the end of the world—there where the Parthian or Mede or Arab lives; there where the strange bird phoenix is born, so that mankind may imagine the birth of a new world-era. Go, son, and hide there: and there your fate will reach you! Nothing lasts forever, nothing is born free from death. Daylight wanes, and night takes its place; the seasons die, and even the (aging) Earth is no longer the same as she was when creating all things.

(60) "The Father of the universe himself, they say, was buried and gone: he changed his shape and went down to visit the infernal realm of his brother. Bacchus perished—so the story goes—through the guile of the Titans, and both Ceres and Venus crossed the stream of Lethe.

(64) "Why should I grieve for a son who is claimed by Destiny? Why should I be exempt from mourning when other mothers mourned in the past? Why, Diomedes lost her son, and Agave tore hers asunder. Althaea killed her son, and so did the goddess Ino. Procne too bewailed Itys while collecting his bleeding entrails. For, whatever lives under the heavenly vault and the roaming wind perishes, passes away, dies, and is buried for good."

(71) When the daughter of Pelias saw these tears of her husband, she cried aloud: "I, I want to be sent to death! My husband, I want

to go to the grave for you! I grant you gladly, I donate my coming days to you, Admetus, a spouse for her spouse! If I die for you, if my sense of duty proves to be greater than that of your mother, than that of your father, immense glory will be in store for me after my death. True, I shall be no more, but my feat will be remembered through centuries to come, and I shall live forever as a *pious wife*. And besides, I shall not look at the sullen faces around me for the rest of my life, I shall not weep each time I attend to your ashes. May such a life of tears stay away from me! I prefer this death. Let me be sent to the grave, let me be carried away by the Ferryman attired in black!

(83) "Before I die, I have only one wish for you. After I am gone, may you never love another woman as much as you did me, may the wife to take my place never be dearer to your heart than I was! As for you, keep loving me! I mean it, not in name only! Think that you are sleeping with me during the night! Do not hesitate to take my ashes into your lap, caress them with a firm hand! Take care that the glowing ashes sweat with oil, and gird my tomb with fresh flowers. If it is true that shades return, I shall come to lie down with you. Whatever shape I may have then, my husband, abandon me not! Let me not be sorry for leaving this daylight for you!

(93) "And before anything else, I entrust you with the pledge of our love, our sons; the pledge which I have borne being pregnant by you alone, so that you may have no complaint about this departure of mine. I shall not perish, I shall not die: believe me, I am preserving myself by leaving behind me the children resembling their mother so much. They are still small: I beg you, may no unworthy hand of a stepmother betray them! Alas! Know that the faithful shade of the mother will come to avenge her crying children!

(100) "And if you neglect me, if the sweet image of me does not come to your mind from time to time . . . * . . . and you too learn to die for your (new) wife (if need be), learn from my example what a sense of duty is."

(104) Stars had already begun to adorn the moving night, and the winged god of Sleep had already dropped the slumber-bringing dew in everybody's eyes, when Alcestis, hastening to die, was lying awake gazing at her husband, watching him shed tears at her imminent death. Now, she bids both her husband and sons often to mourn loudly for her; she takes care of her servants in her last will; she arranges for her own funeral, glad in her heart. Here is her ornate bier, here her embroidered last garment . . . * (she piles up) foreign plants, spices and perfumes, frankincense and saffron-essence. She

collects the pale balsam from the wet balsam-tree; she beats to powder the fragrant amomum, snatched away from a bird's nest; she gathers the dry cinnamon from the purple-colored boughs, and she gives orders for all these spices to be burnt on the pyre along with her.

(117) The Hour of death was approaching the young woman to take away her daylight. She touched her with her hand, no more. Numbness started seizing her every limb. Dying slowly, she watched her fingernails becoming blue, her freezing feet growing heavy with the frost of death. A fleeting shadow, woman no more, she seeks refuge in Admetus' lap. And when she felt that her senses were leaving her for good, she cries aloud: "Husband, my love! Death, death at the last has come: she is taking me away. The infernal god is enfolding my limbs with slumber."

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